of Telecom Services. Department of Telecom Operations was created *vide* Cabinet Secretariat Notification dated 17.7.2000.

The Rules for the Allocation of Business of the Government are made by the President under Clause (3) of Article 77 of the Constitution for convenient transaction of business of the Government. The business to be transacted in various Ministries and Departments is specified in the Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules, 1961. Each Department is under the charge of a Minister and the business allocated to the Department under the Allocation of Business Rules, is disposed of under the general or special directions of, the Minister-in-charge of the Department. The number of Ministries/Departments at a given point of time is thus based on the administrative convenience of the Government.

Downsizing of the strength of bureaucrats in Central Government

592. SHRI S. AGNIRAJ: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government, instead of reducing the posts are increasing the number of top level bureaucrats;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) what steps are being taken to minimise the level of senior officials in view of the liberalised policy which leaves very litle work for bureaucracy;

(d) whether it is not a fact that it will incur additional expenditure on the exchequer; and

(e) what steps are being taken to reduce these expenses?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS AND PUBLIC GRIEVANCES OF THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) to (e) The Rules for the Allocation of Business of the Government are made by the President under Clause (3) of Article 77 of the Constitution for convenient transaction of business of the Government. The business to be transacted in various Ministries and Departments is specified in

the Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules, 1961. Each Department is under the charge of a Minister and the business allocated to the Department under the Allocation of Business Rules, is disposed of under the general or special directions of the Minister-in-charge of the Department. The number of Ministries/Departments at a given point of time is thus based on the administrative convenience of the Government. While it is true that recently seven new posts of secretaries have been created consequent on creation of new departments, three posts at the level of secretaries have either been abolished or kept in abeyance. There are 2 secretaries who have been given charge of 2 departments each.

As for cutting expenditure on the salaries of the civil servants in general, the Ministry of Finance (Department of Expenditure) has been issuing instructions from time to time to control creation of Plan and Non-Plan posts and to abolish a certain percentage of posts in order to reduce the expenditure on salaries. In August, 1999, instructions were issued by that Ministry to all the Ministries/ Departments, *inter alia*, to undertake a review of all the posts which were lying vacant in the Ministries/Departments and in their Attached and Subordinate Offices, etc. in consultation with the Ministry of Finance (Department of Expenditure). These instructions envisage that till the reivew is completed, no vacant posts will be filled up except with the approval of the Ministry of Finance (Department of Expenditure). Further, such Ministries/Departments as had not fully implemented the Government's earlier decision to achieve 10% reduction in the number of posts (as on 1.1.1992) have been asked to implement that decision immediately. According to the information available with the Ministry of Finance, approximately 1.83 lakh posts have been abolished so far in various Ministries/Departments as a result of this exercise.

Ban on new recruitments

593. SHRI BRAHMAKUMAR BHATT: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have directed all Departments not to process new recruitment;